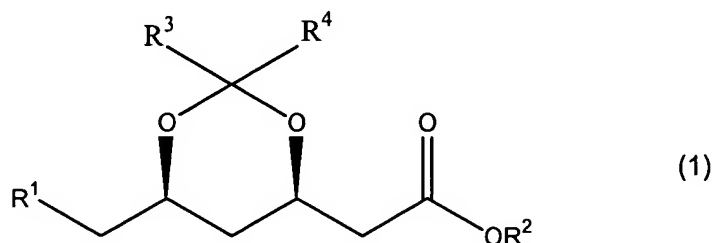


Amendments to the Claims:

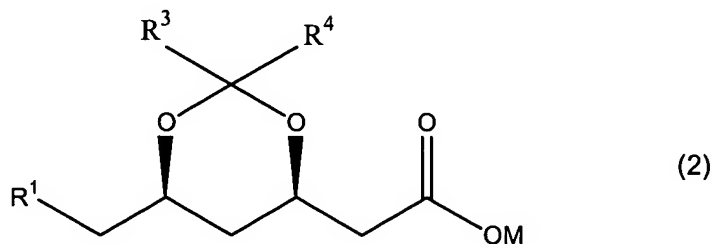
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process ~~Process~~ for the preparation of an ester of formula (1),



wherein R¹ represents a leaving group, CN, OH or a COOR⁵ group, R³ and R⁴ each independently represent a 1-3 C alkyl group, and COOR² [[R²]] and COOR⁵ [[R⁵]] each independently represent an ester residue, comprising contacting wherein the corresponding salt of [[with]] formula (2),



wherein M represents H or an alkali or alkaline earth (earth) metal ~~in an inert solvent is contacted~~ with an acid chloride forming agent in an inert solvent to form the corresponding acid chloride, and contacting the acid chloride is ~~contacted~~ with an alcohol of [[with]] formula R²OH in the presence of N-methyl-morpholine.

2. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1, wherein M represents an alkali metal.

3. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein R² represents an alkyl group.
4. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 3, wherein R² represents a t-butyl ~~t-butyl~~ group.
5. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1-4~~, wherein the acid chloride forming agent is oxalylchloride.
6. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1-5~~, wherein the acid chloride formation is performed in the presence of a catalyst.
7. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1-6~~, wherein the amount of alcohol of ~~of~~ [[with]] formula R²OH is between 3 and 6 equivalents calculated with respect to the amount of salt with formula (2).
8. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1-7~~, wherein first the salt of ~~of~~ [[with]] formula (2) is converted into the corresponding acid chloride and subsequently the acid chloride is contacted with the alcohol of ~~of~~ [[with]] formula R²OH and N-methyl-morpholine.
9. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 8, wherein the acid chloride is quenched with the alcohol of ~~of~~ [[with]] formula R²OH and N-methyl-morpholine.
10. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1-9~~, wherein R¹ represents a leaving group, and wherein the ester of formula (1) [[1]] ~~wherein R¹ represents a leaving group~~ is subsequently converted into the corresponding ester of ~~of~~ [[with]] formula (1) [[1]] wherein R¹ ~~[[R1]]~~ represents an acyloxy group.
11. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ according to claim 10, wherein first the ~~the~~ [[an]] ester of formula 1 wherein R¹ represents an acyloxy group is prepared and subsequently

the ester of formula (1) $[[1]]$ is converted into the corresponding compound with formula 1 wherein R^1 represents OH.